

**Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace  
Relations**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE  
Budget Estimates 2010-2011**

**Outcome 2 - Schools**

**DEEWR Question No.EW0349\_11**

**Senator Mason asked on 3/06/2010, Hansard page 14.**

**Question**

**PALMAVENUESCHOOL IN PARTNERSHIP WITH DALWOOD ASSESSMENT  
CENTRE**

Ms Phillips—This is a centre in New South Wales that provides diagnostic and assessment services for students with educational difficulties. Sorry, I will just read through—

Senator MASON—Sure. It is receiving Commonwealth funding?

Ms Phillips—I would have to take that on notice I think.

Senator MASON—All right. Ms Phillips—I am aware of the school and some of the issues that they have been working through with the New South Wales Department of Education. I understand that they have created an expert advisory panel to look at sustainable programs for children with complex reading difficulties who live in remote New South Wales and how they progress the work, by I am not aware of what our funding commitments are.

Senator MASON—Could you take it on notice, if you will, and let the committee know what the funding arrangements from the Commonwealth are and is it now or has it ever received Commonwealth funding?

Ms Paul—It is not hard to work out. It will come down to whether it is a registered school and then whether it is also seen as a school specialising in disability.

Senator MASON—I suppose the theme is the special needs schools, and often you are right, they do not necessarily cater for a lot of children but they are so critical to those families and it is just a pity when people contact my office and say that they are under threat of closure. I understand under the funding arrangements that often, as you say, they are at maximum funding and I do not dispute that at all. It just seems a pity that there cannot be some arrangements.

Dr Bruniges—The advice I have in front of me says they are funded and managed by the New South Wales Department of Education and Training. It would probably be totally funded by them through recurrent funding flow I suspect and it would depend on other supports that the New South Wales Department of Education and Training would have with categories of schools. Different categories of schools within the New South Wales area would receive different forms of funding, which would be different to integrated students.

Senator MASON—Can you take it on notice?

Dr Bruniges—Absolutely.

**Answer**

The NSW Department of Education and Training has advised that statements over the perceived closure of Dalwood Assessment Centre and Palm Avenue School are incorrect.

PalmAvenueSchool is a NSW government school and receives Commonwealth funding under the National Education Agreement. In 2009-10 \$3.3 billion was provided to the NSW Government for all NSW government schools. Individual school funding details are not specified.

Under the Building the Education Revolution program PalmAvenueSchool received a total of \$351,000.00 for a new classroom and school refurbishments.

Dalwood Assessment Centre is not an education provider and is managed and funded by the NSW Health Department.

Dalwood Assessment Centre and PalmAvenueSchool provides two distinct services:

1. a diagnostic and assessment service provided by the Dalwood Assessment Centre, managed and funded by the New South Wales (NSW) Health Department; and
2. PalmAvenueSchool, a NSW government school which provides educational programs including an outreach service and an intensive residential program.

Diagnostic assessments continue to be conducted by NSW Health staff at Dalwood Assessment Centre, Seaforth. PalmAvenueSchool is managing the operation of intervention services. These services include an outreach program along with a month long residential program. The residential program will provide two student intakes during Term 2 this year. The residential program is operated and managed by PalmAvenueSchool staff at Royal Far West, Manly.